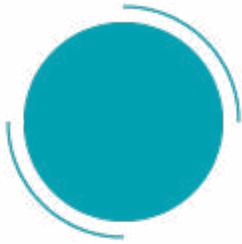




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Marketing

MARKETING RESOURCES

Video Marketing



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Video marketing is taking over. In recent years, there has been a dramatic uptick in the dominance of video, and it's not slowing down. If you're not working in video, you're getting left behind. Don't believe us? Consider this:

[A third of online activity is spent watching video content](#) in some form or another. 85% of the US internet audience watches video, including half a billion people watching videos on Facebook every day. And combined, more video is uploaded to the internet every month than the major US television networks have created in 30 years.

All of this comes alongside unprecedented fragmentation. It wasn't long ago that there was one way to consume video content: your TV. Now there's Youtube, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and dozens of others. Consumers are cutting the cord from traditional TV broadcasts and separating into smaller communities watching only the exact content they want to see. Marketing is changing — you'll need to change with it.

Chapter One: Social Media Platforms And Video

It's not a trend — social media as a platform for video content isn't going anywhere, at least not any time soon. Yes, video is more difficult to create than text posts and links, but if you don't have a plan to incorporate it into your social media strategy, now's the time to start.

Let's talk platforms. Video posts on Facebook [reach 135% as many people](#) as photo posts, according to Forbes. Last year, Youtube announced that they'd reached 1.5 billion logged-in monthly users visiting the site every month — that doesn't even count the viewers that don't use Google accounts when they visit the site. [45% of internet users watch more than an hour of Facebook or Youtube video a day](#) — not quite at the level of traditional TV, but closing the gap.

Twitter — once the home of short, quippy, digestible content — is experiencing its own video renaissance. Tweets with video are [six times more likely to be retweeted](#) than text or photo tweets, and most Twitter users don't mind —

between two-thirds and three-quarters of them [don't find video ads to be intrusive](#).

In broad-strokes terms, video on social media generates 1200% more engagement than text or photos, often in real-time — with the rise of Facebook Live and Youtube personalities, 13% of total video traffic in 2018 was from live video. Social media is a juggernaut that's not slowing down. It's a massive audience, it's where your customers spend a lot of their time, and they want to see video.

Chapter Two: Streaming Video Is The New Cable

Make no mistake: cable TV is still huge. There's a reason the Super Bowl is famously some of the most expensive ad space money can buy. But cable is losing its footing at the top of the media mountain, and streaming is getting a little close for comfort.

“Cord-cutting” is getting more and more common — the number of US adults who have canceled their cable and won't come back will increase to 33 million by the end of 2018. [That's a third of all adults](#) who aren't seeing ads on TV anymore.

That doesn't mean that these cord-cutters aren't watching video content anymore, though — they're just streaming like crazy. Over-the-top (OTT) video services — a term for media providers who produce content directly over the internet, bypassing broadcast TV channels that would normally curate such content — have grown through the roof in recent years.

Netflix boasts 147.5 million people watching at least once a month. For Amazon Prime, the number is 88.7 million. Hulu sees another 55 million, with HBONow trailing behind at 17.1 million. There are also plenty of other services — Sling, Youtube TV, Fubo, Acorn, Vudu, CBS All Access, ESPN+, and so on — that cater to specific niches.

Due to the success of original content — [Netflix, Amazon, and Hulu have all been awarded Emmys for their shows](#) — many users have multiple streaming

accounts. And 30.1% of internet users use some form of ad blocker. What this means for the advertiser is that not only is it harder to get your whole audience in one place, but it's hard to serve them an ad once you do find them. Marketers have to be more creative.

Chapter Three: Video Best Practices

So you know how important video content is — now how do you make the best video you can? Length is key: people often see video in passing, while browsing Facebook or Instagram, so [videos of less than two minutes are likely to produce the highest engagement](#).

That doesn't mean there's no room for longer-form video content. There's a "sweet spot" of engagement [between six and twelve minutes long](#), so if you have a more complex topic to cover, feel free to put the time in. Don't make your video longer just to make it longer, though — several short, focused pieces of content are more effective than one long one.

Quality is important, too. Your videos need to be crisp, clean, and professional. If you can spare the time and effort to make them yourself, that's ideal. That way, you can infuse the videos with your personal style and visuals that will match your brand. Keep in mind that you don't need to use actual video footage — lots of brands use screenshots and animation, or even slideshows, to tell their story.

If you don't have the means to produce your own videos, outsourcing is a good option. It's better to pay a professional agency to produce high-quality videos that you'll be proud to hang your name on than to produce something you're not comfortable with.

Strategy Comes First

Before you publish anything, you should have a strategy in place. If you publish videos that seem disjointed and unrelated — either to each other or to the content that your customers are interested in — they'll lose interest.

Timeliness will be important when planning your video content. You should be able to anticipate big events, relevant holidays, major sales, and the like far enough in advance that you can create content before it's actually needed.

You'll also need to consider whether to react to real-time events. Sometimes, news stories will break that are extremely pertinent to your business, and you'll have to make a snap decision as to whether to address them or not. The answer is not always yes — if you don't think you can create a high-quality, relevant, on-brand video on short notice, leave it alone. Talk about the news in the form of text and photo posts instead. When it comes to breaking news video, being late is as bad as not addressing it at all.

To plan, get a lot of people involved. Actually creating the video is certainly not something you want to do by committee, but when it comes to planning, the more ideas, the better. Get a bunch of people from different parts of your company in front of a whiteboard and start writing stuff down. When it comes to raw ideas, anything goes — maybe customer service gets a lot of questions about a particular feature that can be addressed in a tutorial, or maybe sales has noticed that no one's taking advantage of a particular pricing plan.

When it comes to the content, your main goal is to inform. Remember, you're getting new customers all the time, so even things that seem obvious to you might be helpful. Explorations of your current products, explanations of features, sneak peeks at future products, and ideas for how to best use your product are all useful.

You can also use videos to humanize your company. To many customers, you're just a faceless logo or a website where they type in their credit card info. Putting a face and a name behind your brand will make customers like you more and foster stronger loyalty.

To that end, use video to tell the story of your brand. Give product recommendations based on what you and your employees actually use. Solicit questions from social media in an "ask me anything" format, then answer them on air, remembering to call out exactly who asked the question

in order to make them feel heard. Shoot some behind-the-scenes footage of how your company runs, or show a day in the life of one of your products. Pull back the curtain a little, and your customers will stay more interested in what you're doing.

Brand Consistency Is Key

With everything you publish online — social media, text on your website, photos on your blog posts, and yes, your videos — you are creating a brand. People will start to link together the sights, colors, vocabulary, and tone of what you do online, crafting an impression of you in their mind whether you like it or not.

This “personality” that your company projects in the minds of everyone you interact with is your brand, and it's vital that that brand remains consistent. You don't want to have an appeal so broad as to be bland and meaningless — Target and Wal-Mart both have extremely wide customer bases, but you're not likely to confuse a TV ad for one of them with an ad for the other. They've managed to cultivate very different ideas about what they're “for,” and everything they do feeds into that.

Finding your brand's voice is difficult — [we have more info on branding and how to find and express a voice here](#) — but well worth the effort. Your videos should use logos, colors, and fonts that match up with the logos, colors, and fonts on your website and social media. The vocabulary you use in the video should sound like the words you use in other contexts — make sure the person in the video and the other people who write copy are on the same page. If you use bright colors and vivid imagery on your site, your videos should look similar — the last thing you want to do is create a video that doesn't “sound like” you.

Where and When To Post Video

Your strategy meetings should address where your video will be hosted and what your schedule looks like, as well. Whether you're creating video in-house or paying someone to do it, there will be an upper limit to how much content

you can create in a given time. Don't over-reach — if you can only produce one video a week, it's better to do that consistently than to try for once a day and fall behind or compromise quality.

If you decide to center your video strategy on Youtube, create a channel, brand it consistently, and keep it updated. Youtube offers a ton of features for content creators — playlists, channels, cross-links, ads, and more — so use them wisely. Upload everything you do to Youtube. Your customers should have to work to find what they want to see.

Of course, that doesn't mean you should only post to Youtube. Your videos took a lot of work, so spread them far and wide. Cut teasers or previews out of them and post the shortened versions to social media to drive traffic to the main video. Embed the videos into relevant web pages and blog posts — if you use Youtube's embed tools, the views will still count toward your stats. Put them in emails, too!

Finally, think about timing. Traffic varies a lot over various platforms — not everyone is looking at the same things at the same time. You'll need to look into the way your particular target markets and buyer personas use the internet, which sites they use, and when they use them.

Some people like to read emails first thing in the morning, some catch up on news after work at the end of the day. And there can be a big difference between posting at the right time and posting randomly — [you can read more about it in our social media pillar here](#).

Chapter Four: Video Moves The Needle

Video isn't just about being flashy — it actually works. Studies have shown that people need multiple points of contact with your brand to start remembering who you are, what you're all about, and whether you're a good solution to their problem.

Video is one of the more powerful points of contact — it generally takes 5-7 times of being exposed to a brand for people to remember it, but video can

fast-track that process. When it comes to videos, viewers retain 95% of the message — when it's text alone, that number falls to 10%.

Video isn't just about being noticed on OTT services and social networks — it can be a big boost to your bottom line as well. For one thing, search engines notice videos. They constitute a more compelling, relevant, and useful user experience, and tend to keep people on your site longer, which leads to an increase in traffic — [up to 157% more traffic from search engine results pages](#).

Video can also help increase conversion on your landing pages once people reach your site. If you have a landing page that's trying to convert a visitor to a customer, or even just to solicit a follow-up, an explanatory video [can increase conversion by up to 80%](#).

Consider product videos as well. If you run an online store that carries thousands of SKUs, making a video for each one might not be plausible, but we're willing to bet you have a few cash cows that sell in much higher quantities than the rest. Make a video showcasing what they look like, how they work, and their best features. Some of those videos can be reused — for example, if you make a video about how to change a bike tire, it can be embedded on the product page for every tire you sell.

Customers want to see product videos — [nearly half of them look for videos before committing to purchasing a particular product](#), and [64% of customers make a purchase after watching a branded video on social media](#).

Of course, we're not discounting the possibility that people who watch product videos are already farther along in the buyer's journey and ready to buy in the first place. But we all know that the buyer's journey isn't a guarantee — someone on the verge of purchasing might change their mind and go elsewhere if they don't find the information they need. A product video is a branded, useful, timely piece of content that can turn an almost-purchase into a repeat customer, and that tipping point is too valuable to ignore.

Some Final Thoughts

It's all too easy to think that video is a flash in the pan — lots of marketers have trouble believing that today's internet audience has the attention span to watch videos. But with the increased fragmentation in video content consumption — people aren't watching TV as much, they're watching streaming services and Youtube and blocking the ads — online video has found a niche to step into.

The numbers don't lie — online video content, usually in short formats, is on the rise and not slowing down. A third of people's time online is spent on video, and 85% of US internet users watch some kind of video on a regular basis.

Not only is video ubiquitous, but it's effective. Engagement rises, organic search goes up, and conversions follow. The fact is that video isn't going anywhere any time soon, and if you're not participating, you're missing out.